United Nations A/54/208

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 August 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
Item 125 of the provisional agenda*
Pattern of conferences

Provision of interpretation services to meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Meetings held by regional and other major groupings are provided with interpretation services on an as available basis, that is, from existing resources not used owing to the cancellation of meetings of calendar bodies. Certain measures can be taken to improve the chances of services being made available and there has been a marked increase in the percentage of meetings provided with interpretation over the three-year period under review, despite a slight downward trend during the first half of 1999. Also of note is the significant rise in the requests for conference facilities outside normal meeting times.

* A/54/150.

99-23291 (E) 170899

UNITED NATIONS **A S**

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/209
S/1999/859
9 August 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Item 77 (a) of the provisional agenda*
REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT OF THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: REGIONAL CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES: ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 2 August 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Subregional High-Level Seminar on the implementation of the recommendations contained in your report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, held in Yaoundé (Cameroon) from 19 to 21 July 1999, as part of the programme of activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 77 (a) of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Martin BELINGA EBOUTOU
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

UNITED NATIONS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

REPORT OF THE SUBREGIONAL HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON THE EXAMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

I. Introduction

As part of the programme of activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the Subregional High-Level Seminar on the Examination and Implementation of the Recommendations Contained in the Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa was held in Yaoundé from 19 to 21 July 1999.

It was decided to hold the Seminar at the tenth ministerial meeting of the countries members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Yaoundé from 26 to 30 October 1998. The participants at that meeting stressed the importance of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General and gave the bureau of the Committee a mandate "to take appropriate steps to organize a high-level seminar aimed at facilitating implementation of the recommendations of relevance to Central Africa".

The following nine countries members of the Committee took part in the Seminar: Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe. Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were invited but did not attend.

So that the Seminar could fully achieve its objectives of promoting sustainable peace and development in Central Africa by suitably adapting the manner of implementation of the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report, each of the countries was represented by social categories whose influence on maintaining a climate of peace and security would be a determining factor: high-level civilian and military officials, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations was represented at the Seminar by Mr. Halidou Ouedraogo.

The secretariat of the Seminar comprised Ms. Pamela Maponga, Ms. Lorian Austin, Ms. Nicole Moran, Mr. Ivor Richard Fung, Mr. Musifiky Mwanasali and Mr. Ferdinand Ngoh Ngoh.

The opening ceremony was chaired by Mr. Augustin Kontchou Kouomegni, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cameroon and Chairman at the Ministerial level

of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa.

The following public figures also graced the ceremony with their presence: Mr. Joseph Dion Ngute, Minister of State to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cameroon, responsible for the Commonwealth; Mr. Adoum Gargoum, Minister of State to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cameroon, responsible for the Islamic world; Mr. Emmanuel Edou, Secretary of State for Defence of Cameroon; and Mr. Antar Gassagaye, Secretary of State to the Ministry of Local Government of Cameroon.

Two important and inspirational speeches were given on this occasion, by Mr. Halidou Ouedraogo, senior officer from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Mr. Augustain Kontchou Kouomegni, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Cameroon.

The participants decided to entrust guidance of the work of the Seminar to the bureau of the Committee.

The work of the Seminar was therefore chaired by Ambassador Martin Belinga Eboutou of Cameroon.

Ambassador Jacques Hakizimana of Burundi acted as Rapporteur.

Mr. Ivor Richard Fung, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, made an introductory statement at the opening of the Seminar.

Mr. Augustin Kontchou Kouomegni, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Cameroon, also chaired the closing ceremony.

The Seminar covered the following subjects:

Theme 1: Typology of the conflicts and crises in Central Africa

Speaker: Mr. William Aurélien Eteki Mboumoua, Head of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Mission on the Proliferation of Light Weapons in the Sahara-Sahel subregion

Theme 2: Mechanisms and methods for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and crises

Speaker: Mr. William Aurélien Eteki Mboumoua

Theme 3: Specific measures to prevent conflicts and insecurity in Central Africa

Speakers: Mr. Jean-Emmanuel Pondi and Mr. Laurent Zang

Theme 4: Peacemaking and peacekeeping measures

Speaker: Mr. Musifiky Mwanasali

Theme 5: Peace-building measures

Speaker: General Cheick Oumar Diarra

Theme 6: Promotion of international humanitarian law

Speakers: Mr. Gilbert Rufin Loubaki and Mr. Daniel Augstburger

Theme 7: Promotion of good governance and sustainable development

Subtheme 1: Promotion of good governance

Speakers: Mr. Jean-Jacques Ndoudoumou and Mr. David Abouem A. Tchoyi

Subtheme 2: Promotion of sustainable development

Speakers: Mr. Martin Zeh-Nlo and Mr. David Tchuinou

II. The work of the Seminar

Following the methodology proposed by the organizers, the Yaoundé Seminar gave rise to information-packed presentations on each theme given by high-level experts of recognized competence and experience, followed by dynamic and constructive exchanges with the participants and closing with relevant recommendations on specific measures to be taken in order to promote peace, security, stability and development in Central Africa.

1. Under the theme "Typology of the conflicts and crises in Central Africa", the Seminar reviewed the various causes of the conflicts which keep tearing the subregion apart. The factors driving these conflicts which the Seminar identified showed why internal conflicts clearly predominate: ethnic rivalries, general decline in the rule of law, democratic shortcomings on the part of the political authorities, defective governance policies, poverty and underdevelopment, identity-based political demands, politicization of ethnicity, shortcomings in reintegrating former combatants, lack of access to agricultural land, economic difficulties and other factors.

The fact that there are also a number of conflicts between States was also highlighted: the causes of these are, essentially, the desire for control of natural resources; the hunger for power; the problems created by refugees; territorial claims, border disputes and the like. Suitable proposals for solutions were made for each case.

2. Under the theme "Mechanisms and methods for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and crises", various methods of peaceful conflict and crisis resolution were examined which could be used in response to the problems facing

Central Africa: mediation, negotiation, good offices, fact-finding missions and judicial settlements.

The approach selected was by a historical analysis of the establishment of conflict prevention, management and resolution mechanisms within an Organization of African Unity (OAU) framework. This approach enabled the Seminar to identify the importance of and the need for international initiatives by States, political figures and international organizations to restore peace in armed conflict situations. It also highlighted the difficulties which peace efforts generally face, primarily intolerance, the lack of a real desire for peace, the thirst for revenge, the refusal to cooperate in good faith and various other impediments.

The discussion of the action taken by OAU and subregional organizations in Africa to find solutions to recent conflicts allowed the Seminar to pinpoint the need for preventive diplomacy based on, among other things, the creation of early-warning mechanisms and the involvement of representatives of civil society (customary chiefs, religious or community leaders, young people and so on) in implementing peace efforts; the need for forcible action to impose peace in some cases, in internal conflicts in particular; and the importance of developing close cooperation between the African regional organizations and the United Nations in matters of conflict prevention, management and resolution.

3. During the examination of the theme "Specific measures to prevent conflicts and insecurity in Central Africa", the speakers, after listing the vectors of conflict in Central Africa, went on to propose measures at the national, subregional and continental levels to contribute to enhanced prevention and management of crises and the maintenance of security.

The fragility of State institutions, the failure of democratic transitions, the exploitation of ethnic differences, the proliferation of paramilitary groups and the uncontrolled circulation of arms were again identified as the chief vectors of conflicts and insecurity in Central Africa. The indirect effects of the measures advocated by the Bretton Woods institutions and the handling by the mass media of African news stories were also cited.

The measures recommended in response to this situation emphasized the concept of sharing, the promotion of a culture of democracy, the inclusion of minorities, the rejection of marginalization, the strengthening of subregional cooperation, the use of mediation, and the reappropriation of democracy and the State through a greater focus on African values.

4. In the course of the examination of the theme "Peacemaking and peacekeeping measures", the participants considered the possibilities and problems of establishing in Central Africa peacemaking and peacekeeping mechanisms that could be utilized in case of conflicts or grave threats to peace.

Emphasis was placed in this respect on the need for confidence-building among the countries of Central Africa, in particular by organizing joint manoeuvres of their armed forces.

The importance of efforts to enhance the compatibility of arms and military equipment with a view to deploying subregional multinational forces in conflict areas was noted.

The discussion of training-related issues allowed the participants to reiterate the need to ensure that foreign assistance in this area took duly into account the concerns expressed by the countries of the subregion based on their specific objectives.

5. The theme "Peace-building measures" was devoted to consideration of the recommendations of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the implementation of measures designed to reduce the risk of a resumption of conflict and contribute to creating the conditions most conducive to national reconciliation, reconstruction and recovery in countries emerging from conflict.

The participants emphasized the critical importance of these measures and the need to implement them as soon as conflicts cease. Generally, they include the re-establishment of institutions; the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the ex-combatants; the repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons; the promotion of democracy and good governance; the gradual reduction of the stock of small-calibre arms in circulation and the disarmament of the groups or individuals in possession of such weapons; the building of a culture of peace based on sound democratic practices and principles, tolerance and peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups; and the mobilization of domestic and international resources for economic reconstruction and recovery.

6. Under the theme "Promotion of international humanitarian law", the participants condemned the massive and repeated violations of the rules of international humanitarian law perpetrated in the course of the numerous conflicts that have taken place in Central Africa, mainly affecting the most vulnerable categories of the population (young people, children, civilians, refugees) and the staff of humanitarian organizations.

Emphasis was placed on the need to disseminate more widely the rules of international humanitarian law and to encourage respect for them, whether through the adoption of legislative measures, regulations and practical action to punish violations of international humanitarian law, or through their incorporation in military and civilian training programmes.

7. The recommendations of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the promotion of good governance and sustainable development were examined within the framework of two subthemes.

Under subtheme 1, "Promotion of good governance", the participants sought to define the basic elements of the concept of good governance and examined its importance for the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Central Africa.

They noted the multifaceted nature of the concept, which combines political, ideological, economic, social, cultural and ethical criteria, and identified its main elements, such as transparency in public administration,

accountability, respect for human rights and legality, promotion of democracy and enhanced management of resources.

The discussion of subtheme 2, "Promotion of sustainable development" was an opportunity to emphasize the close link between peace and development.

The participants underlined the need for the countries of Central Africa to step up their efforts to create conditions conducive to economic growth and sustainable human development as a means of preventing conflicts. They also recognized that these efforts, vital though they were, would not be sufficient without the support of the international community, and in particular of international organizations and bilateral donors.

The consideration of each theme led to a wide-ranging and enriching exchange of views between the speakers and the Seminar participants.

The participants noted, as had Mr. Augustin Kontchou Kouomegni, Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cameroon, that several of the decisions adopted within the framework of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa mirrored the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report.

III. Recommendations

At the conclusion of these discussions, the participants unanimously congratulated the Secretary-General of the United Nations, whose report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa constitutes, in their opinion, an excellent analytical reference document on conflicts in Africa.

The participants also expressed satisfaction at the felicitous decision to hold the Seminar, the calibre of the eminent figures and experts who prepared and presented the introductory statements, the broad participation by Central African States, the high rank of their representatives, and the practical arrangements made by the host country and the United Nations in order to ensure the Seminar's success.

While they emphasized the similarity between the ideas contained in the Secretary-General's report and those which had emerged during the discussions, the participants formulated and adopted the following recommendations:

1. Promotion of inclusive democracy

- Promotion of the holding of free and transparent elections in the countries of Central Africa;

- Strengthening of the rule of law and implementation of a democratic policy enabling all social forces and minorities to participate fully in political life;

- Dissemination of a culture of democracy and a culture of peace in Central Africa.

2. Promotion of the peaceful settlement of disputes

- Promotion of a continuous dialogue among the actors in national life, with none excluded, in order to consolidate the peace processes under way and prevent the outbreak of new conflicts;

- Strengthening of the role of civil society, in particular women's and youth organizations, in efforts to prevent and resolve crises and conflicts;

- Appointment of national mediators to defuse crises and prevent disputes from degenerating into armed conflicts, and establishment of a database of African mediators chosen on the basis of their credibility among the population;

- Establishment at the subregional level of information-sharing and educational networks with a view to enabling future leaders, and in particular young people and women, to build close relationships;

- Extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) until durable peace and security have been established throughout the territory of the Central African Republic.

3. Measures to combat illicit trafficking in and proliferation of light weapons

- Establishment of national commissions to combat the proliferation of light weapons;

- Request to the United Nations Secretary-General to establish an advisory mission on the proliferation of light weapons in the Central African subregion;

- Drafting of a Community charter on investments providing for coercive measures against companies funding armed militias;

- Establishment of a subregional register of conventional arms;

- Revision and harmonization of national laws on the bearing of arms;

- Disarmament and repatriation of the elements of the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo remaining in the territory of the Central African Republic, and provision of logistical support to the armed forces of the Central African Republic to enable them to maintain security effectively along the country's borders.

4. Promotion of cooperation in the fields of defence and security

- Promotion of non-military cooperation among the armed forces and security forces of the subregion;

- Acceleration of the process of preparing and conducting the joint exercises planned to simulate peacekeeping operations, named Biyongho-98;

- Promotion of closer cooperation among Ministries of Defence and other scientific ministries with a view to enhancing regional expertise in map-making;

- Establishment of a joint communication structure with responsibility for providing the international community with comprehensive information on Central African issues.

5. Promotion of international humanitarian law

- Acceleration of the process of establishing in Yaoundé a centre for the promotion of human rights and democracy, in accordance with the decisions taken at previous meetings of the Advisory Committee;

- Systematic inclusion of humanitarian issues on the agenda for the Committee's meetings;

- Systematic dissemination of the rules of humanitarian law, in particular through their incorporation in military and civilian training programmes;

- Establishment, through legislation and regulations, of mechanisms for the repression of violations of international humanitarian law;

- Incorporation in the internal legal order of the countries of Central Africa of the international legal instruments on the protection of children, women and refugees, particularly in time of armed conflict.

6. Promotion of a peacekeeping and peacemaking mechanism

- Development of cooperation among the countries of the subregion in strengthening peacekeeping capacity;

- Need for the speedy establishment of a body with responsibility for conflict prevention, management and resolution in Central Africa;

- Acceleration of the process of amending the basic documents of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in order to allow for the integration in this institution of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), in accordance with the decision of the Central African Heads of State and Government meeting in Malabo on 24 June 1999.

7. Promotion of good governance

- Prioritization of the investment of the fruits of economic growth in reforms, measures and projects affecting the largest possible number

of people, in particular the most vulnerable sections of the population;

- Combating of discrimination against women and young people, or on grounds of ethnicity and regional origin, with respect to promotion to senior posts in Government and the public service;

- Prioritization of the involvement of young people and women in good governance programmes, and systematic development of a youth component in all such programmes;

- Establishment of good governance programmes in all Central African countries.

8. Promotion of sustainable development

- Intensification of efforts to promote social development and eradicate poverty in the countries of Central Africa;

- Promotion of social justice and elimination of all forms of discrimination in economic activity;

- Establishment in the countries of Central Africa of an environment conducive to investment and economic growth.

9. Strengthening of subregional integration

- Fresh impetus to economic integration and strengthening of multi-sectoral exchanges between the countries of Central Africa;

- Establishment of a subregional structure with responsibility for facilitating the implementation of the decisions of the ECCAS Heads of State regarding the movement of certain categories of persons and the management and protection of borders;

- Promotion of the integration of Central African nationals in the economic fabric of each country;

- Acceleration of the process of establishing a subregional parliament in Central Africa, in accordance with the decision of the Heads of State and Government of the countries members of ECCAS at the meeting held in Malabo in June 1999.

10. Miscellaneous

- Establishment in each country of a structure with responsibility for follow-up to the recommendations of the Seminar.

The participants expressed satisfaction at the cordial atmosphere that had prevailed throughout their work and thanked the President of the Republic of Cameroon, H.E. Mr. Paul Biya, and the people of Cameroon for the warm welcome and wonderful hospitality extended to them.

DONE at Yaoundé on 21 July 1999.

UNITED
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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/210
S/1999/860
9 August 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

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SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 2 August 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you, enclosed herewith, the report of the high-level subregional seminar on the implementation of the recommendations contained in your report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, held at Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 19 to 21 July 1999, within the framework of the activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 77 (a), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Martin BELINGA EBOUTOU
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

UNITED NATIONS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SECURITY QUESTIONS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

1. The eleventh ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held at Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 21 to 23 July 1999.

2. The following States members took part in the meeting: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe. The Republic of Angola was unable to attend.

3. The representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) also participated in the work of the meeting.

At the opening ceremony, statements were made by Mr. Halidou Ouedraogo, representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Secretary of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force for African Economic Recovery and Development, who read out a message from the Secretary-General, and His Excellency Mr. Peter Mafany Musonge, Prime Minister, Head of Government of the Republic of Cameroon.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Interim report of the Bureau

3. Consideration of the report of the high-level subregional seminar on the consideration and implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318)

4. Consideration of the expert report to the eleventh ministerial meeting:

   A. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in Central Africa

B. Intergovernmental cooperation in security matters in Central Africa

C. Evaluation of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the tenth ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee

D. Establishment of an early warning mechanism

E. Organization of military exercises in connection with peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of Central Africa

F. Establishment of a subregional parliament in Central Africa

G. Establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy

H. Establishment of a subregional mechanism for the prevention, containment and settlement of conflicts

5. Collaboration with the Secretariat General of ECCAS

6. Other matters

7. Adoption of the report of the eleventh ministerial meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee.

CONDUCT OF WORK

I. INTERIM REPORT OF THE BUREAU

The Committee took note of the interim report by His Excellency Mr. Augustin Kontchou Kouomegni, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cameroon, as Chairman of the Bureau at the ministerial level.

The Committee welcomed the efforts made by the Bureau to date to discharge the mandates entrusted to it by the tenth ministerial meeting, particularly those concerning the lifting of the embargo against Burundi, the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA), the holding of a high-level seminar on the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on conflicts in Africa and the holding of a summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the Central African countries on the establishment of a mechanism for the prevention, containment and settlement of conflicts and crises.

II. REVIEW OF THE GEOPOLITICAL AND SECURITY SITUATION IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Angola

The Committee endorsed the position of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted recently at the Algiers Summit and the relevant Security Council resolutions on the situation in Angola. It expressed deep concern at the impasse prevailing in that country and recommended that a subregional summit meeting be convened urgently in order to break the deadlock.

The Committee mandated the Bureau to undertake appropriate initiatives to that end.

Burundi

The Committee welcomed the positive developments in Burundi and, in particular, the consolidation of the agreement on the political platform between the Government and the National Assembly, and encouraged the transition institutions currently in place to continue to take new initiatives to promote genuine national reconciliation.

The Committee also welcomed the suspension of the embargo which had been declared unjustly against Burundi.

The Committee appealed urgently for mediation so that all the parties to the conflict might be invited to and participate in the inter-Burundian talks being held in Arusha.

It called for the rapid declaration of a ceasefire in order to halt the massacres of innocent civilians.

The Committee also appealed urgently to the international community to support the Government's efforts, in particular, by resuming its economic cooperation aimed at alleviating the suffering of the bruised and battered Burundian people.

Cameroon

The Committee welcomed the strengthening of the climate of peace and stability in Cameroon. It welcomed the imminent adoption of a national good governance programme which would create the most favourable conditions for durable peace and sustainable development.

In view of the impact of the border dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria on peace and security in the subregion, the Committee welcomed the observance by the two countries of the Geneva Conventions, through the exchange of prisoners of war carried out on 24 November 1998 under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The Committee, while reiterating its appeal to the international community and friendly countries to assist in maintaining peace between Cameroon and

Nigeria before, during and after the verdict of the International Court of Justice, requested the Court to take the necessary steps to ensure a rapid conclusion of the proceeding currently before it.

The Committee again urged Nigeria to comply strictly with the interim measures of protection laid down by the Court in its ruling of 15 March 1996, and called upon the two parties to refrain from taking any action that could create difficulties for the application of the final judgment of the Court.

The Committee welcomed the high-level contacts held between Cameroon and Nigeria with a view to promoting a climate of peace and harmony in their bilateral relations. It expressed the wish, accordingly, for the international community to contribute to strengthening the climate of confidence created by those contacts and to encourage the two countries to refrain from taking any action that could undermine the integrity of their respective territories.

The Committee expressed concern at the ongoing cross-border phenomenon of roadblocks, the illegal circulation of small-calibre weapons and weapons of war and the increase in organized crime.

Congo

The Committee was informed of the positive developments in the Congo since the bloody events of December 1998.

It noted with satisfaction the restoration of peace, the reintegration into the army of 430 followers of former President Pascal Lissouba, the return of some political exiles to Brazzaville and of populations displaced by the war to their respective districts, the control of the entire national territory by the Government and the forthcoming Panafrican Music Festival, to be held in Brazzaville from 1 to 8 August.

It welcomed the efforts made by the Congolese authorities to restore peace and foster national reconciliation, particularly the clearly expressed willingness of President Denis Sassou-Nguesso to open a dialogue with all sons and daughters of the Congo.

The Committee appealed solemnly to the entire Congolese people to adhere fully to this desire for peace and national harmony by putting an end to the use of violence, thus committing itself firmly to the task of rebuilding the country and relaunching the democratic process.

The Committee reiterated its appeal to the international community to support the Congo in its efforts to rebuild the country.

Gabon

The Committee welcomed the climate of peace and political stability in Gabon.

It expressed concern at the grave situation created in Gabon by the massive influx of refugees from warring neighbouring countries and again appealed

urgently to the United Nations, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and to the international community to provide assistance to Gabon with a view to meeting the varied needs of the refugees and helping the country to stem the danger posed by the entry of armed refugees into its territory.

Equatorial Guinea

The Committee welcomed the climate of peace and political stability prevailing in Equatorial Guinea following the latest legislative elections held in May 1999, which had brought three political parties into the National Assembly.

The Committee expressed concern, however, at the incursions to which Equatorial Guinea had been subjected as a result of rivalries between foreign powers over the country's natural resources.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Committee appealed urgently for the rapid conclusion of a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of that country.

It welcomed the recent signing of the Lusaka accord by the Heads of State and Government of the countries affected by the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and urged the other parties concerned to do likewise. It called upon all parties to respect the terms of the agreement.

It strongly recommended the opening of a national dialogue among all sons of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the convening of a summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the Central African countries on the issue.

Central African Republic

The Committee welcomed the gradual restoration of peace and security to the Central African Republic following the serious crises generated by the successive rebellions in 1996 and 1997, thanks to the combined efforts of the Central African people, the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) and MINURCA.

It took note of the continuing programme to collect weapons circulating in the country carried out with the assistance of MINURCA. It expressed support for the national programme to demobilize and reintegrate soldiers, which is part of the restructuring of the Central African armed forces.

The Committee welcomed the decision of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to provide the Central African Republic with a grant for the purpose of liquidating a portion of the wage, retirement pension and scholarship arrears, which would undoubtedly contribute to pacifying the social climate.

The Committee expressed satisfaction at the steps taken by the Government of the Central African Republic to ensure that the next presidential election

was held in conditions of peace and security. The Committee welcomed the support provided by the international community for the holding of the election.

The Committee expressed concern at the massive influx into the Central African Republic of refugees and combatants fleeing the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It appealed to the international community to assist the Central African Republic in coping with the situation, which could jeopardize the as-yet fragile peace in that country.

While welcoming the efforts made by the United Nations to restore durable peace in the Central African Republic, the Committee called for an extension of the current mandate of MINURCA.

The Chairman of the Bureau was mandated to undertake initiatives to that end vis-à-vis the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Rwanda

The Committee welcomed the restoration of peace and the economic recovery in Rwanda, while encouraging the country to persevere in the search for peace and dialogue. It took note of the holding of local elections in that country at the end of 1998 and the decision of the Forum of Parties making up the Government of National Unity to extend the transition period by four years.

It welcomed the improvement of the security situation in Rwanda and the recent signing of the Lusaka accord. It urged all the parties concerned to comply strictly with the terms of that agreement in order to foster the establishment of durable peace and sustainable development in the region.

Sao Tome and Principe

The Committee welcomed the climate of peace and stability that obtained in Sao Tome and Principe and the efforts made by the Government to promote economic recovery thanks to the encouraging prospects that were emerging.

The Committee welcomed with satisfaction the commitment of Sao Tome and Principe to work towards the eradication of the conflicts causing upheaval in the Central African subregion and its determination to express solidarity with countries whose populations had suffered the devastating impact of war.

Chad

The Committee welcomed the efforts made by the Government of the Republic of Chad in matters of peace and security, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It noted with satisfaction the consolidation of the process of stabilizing the institutions that had emerged from various consultations and the continuation of the policy of dialogue initiated by President Idriss Deby.

Nevertheless, it expressed concern about the continuing cross-border phenomena of the illegal circulation of small-calibre weapons, drug trafficking and roadblocks, as well as the difficulties of reintegrating demobilized soldiers.

III. INTER-STATE COOPERATION IN SECURITY MATTERS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

The Committee took note with satisfaction of the actions and initiatives taken by the States members within the framework of cooperation in security matters aimed, in particular, at lessening tension and combating insecurity in the border areas, as well as making it possible to have exchanges between the various national structures dealing with these questions.

In view of the cross-border nature of most of the security problems in the subregion and owing to the need to respond to them in a joint and concerted manner, the Committee again strongly recommended greater cooperation and dialogue among the security forces of the Central African countries, particularly within the framework of periodic meetings and the organization of joint operations.

The Committee particularly welcomed in this regard:

- The meetings between the Gabonese and Congolese authorities on the security problems in the south of Gabon, caused by the influx of refugees and the infiltration of armed elements coming from the Congo;

- The cooperation between the security forces of Gabon and Cameroon which had, in particular, led to the recent transfer by the Gabonese authorities of criminals who had committed offences in Cameroon;

- The periodic meetings of joint commissions on the borders between Chad and Cameroon;

- The meetings between the military authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic on the population movements on the borders of the two countries.

The Committee expressed grave concern about the proliferation of small-calibre weapons and weapons of war in the subregion. It welcomed the forthcoming holding in Chad of a subregional conference on this question in preparation for the twelfth ministerial meeting scheduled for October 1999.

The Committee expressed concern about the resurgence of organized crime and insecurity in the countries in the subregion, particularly the development of the phenomenon of roadblocks. It recommended the holding of a high-level meeting on the question at which the establishment of an appropriate legal framework for cooperation in the matter would, in particular, be envisaged.

The Committee also recommended the establishment of an anti-crime fund. The Bureau was mandated to study and propose ways and means of allocating sufficient resources to the fund.

Recalling the importance of the Non-Aggression Pact concluded in 1996 between the countries of Central Africa for peace and security in the subregion, the Committee invited the countries that had signed the Pact to ratify it. It recommended that the Bureau should draw the attention of the countries which had not yet done so to the need to sign and/or ratify the Pact so that it could enter into force before 2000. The Committee also requested the States members to sign the Mutual Assistance Pact before 2000.

Aware of the need to strengthen cooperation in peace and security matters in the subregion, the Committee welcomed the signing at Yaoundé in April 1999, during the meeting of the Committee of Central African Police Chiefs, of the agreement on criminal police cooperation. It appealed to the countries which had not yet done so to take all necessary steps to proceed to the rapid signing of this text and guarantee its full effectiveness.

The Committee expressed grave concern about the security problems created in the subregion by the massive influx of refugees and armed elements coming from other countries. It advocated increased bilateral contacts aimed at lessening the tension aroused by this situation. It also requested the Bureau to take the initiatives needed for the holding of a high-level meeting to consider ways and means of solving the resulting problems.

IV. EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TENTH MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A. Establishment of an early warning mechanism

The Committee took note of the advancement of the project to establish an early warning mechanism and welcomed the decision of the Gabonese Government to provide premises for the mechanism in Libreville.

The Bureau of the Committee was mandated to contact the United Nations with a view to the holding of a meeting to launch the early warning mechanism to be attended by ECCAS, the host country of the mechanism, the United Nations and OAU.

B. Organization of military exercises in connection with peacekeeping operations between the armed forces of the countries of Central Africa

The Committee, after taking note of the meeting of the chiefs of the armed forces general staffs and the meeting of military experts of ECCAS member States, held in Gabon from 1 to 3 May 1998 and from 1 to 25 June 1998, respectively, stressed the importance of joint simulation exercises for peacekeeping operations as an effective means of promoting confidence and strengthening comradeship-in-arms and the operational capacities of the armed

forces of the Central African countries in maintaining peace. It therefore reaffirmed its wish to plan and carry out exercises of this type.

The Committee mandated the Bureau to take all appropriate steps to:

- Finalize the documentation for the Biyongho-98 exercise project designed by the military experts of the Committee;

- Obtain from the States members of the Committee a substantial contribution making it possible to hold the exercise during the second half of 2000;

- Expedite the initiatives undertaken vis-à-vis the United Nations, other international organizations and donor countries concerning the request for a logistic and financial contribution for the effective implementation of the project.

C. Establishment of a subregional parliament in Central Africa

The Committee took note with satisfaction of the developments in the project to establish a subregional parliament in Central Africa, particularly the decision taken by the Heads of State and Government of the countries in the subregion, meeting at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 1999, to set up a network of parliamentarians for that purpose.

The Bureau of the Committee was mandated to convene an urgent meeting of subregional experts and parliamentarians charged with studying the modalities for the implementation of the network and securing the financing necessary for its functioning.

D. Establishment of a subregional centre for human rights and democracy

The Committee welcomed the initiatives undertaken by the Bureau and all of its members vis-à-vis the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) with a view to the establishment of the subregional centre for human rights and democracy.

It expressed appreciation to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Mary Robinson, for her efforts to realize the project to establish the centre, and welcomed the forthcoming appointment in Yaoundé, Cameroon, of an official of UNHCHR as regional adviser for the launching of the project.

E. Establishment of a subregional mechanism for the prevention, management and settlement of conflicts

The Committee took note with satisfaction of the developments in the implementation of the project, particularly:

- The establishment by the Heads of State and Government of the countries in the subregion, meeting at Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 25 February 1999, of a Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX);

- The decision taken by the Heads of State and Government of Central African countries, meeting at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on 24 June 1999, to integrate COPAX into the structures of ECCAS.

The Committee mandated the Bureau to provide assistance to the Secretariat General of ECCAS with a view to expediting the revision of the Treaty establishing the Community, decided on at the Malabo Summit, in order to make it possible for COPAX to be launched rapidly.

V. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION IN CENTRAL AFRICA OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

The Committee took note of the report and the recommendations of the high-level seminar on the implementation in Central Africa of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318), and congratulated the participants on the relevance and high quality of the results of their work.

The Committee mandated the Chairman of the Bureau to transmit the conclusions of the seminar to the member States, the Secretary General of ECCAS, the Secretary-General of OAU and the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to their implementation.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH THE SECRETARIAT GENERAL OF ECCAS

Taking into account the decisions adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Central African countries at the summit meeting held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Committee requested the Bureau to discharge its various mandates in close collaboration with the Secretariat General of ECCAS.

VII. OTHER MATTERS

The Committee stressed the need to hold at least one meeting of the Bureau before its own meetings.

The Committee urged the member States to pay their contributions regularly to the special fund set up to finance its activities.

Yaoundé, 23 July 1999

United Nations A/54/211

General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 August 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
Item 48 of the provisional agenda*
The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti

Letter dated 6 August 1999 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I last reported to the General Assembly on 10 May 1999 on the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti (A/53/950). I now wish to bring the General Assembly up to date on developments concerning the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH), our joint mission with the Organization of American States (OAS) in Haiti, which will have an impact on our continuing efforts there.

MICIVIH was established in 1993 as a joint mission of OAS and the United Nations, charged with monitoring, verifying and strengthening human rights conditions in Haiti. This joint mission has contributed significantly to the efforts of the Government of Haiti to strengthen democratic institutions and protect the human rights of its citizens and is viewed as a prime example of the close collaboration between our two organizations. By its resolution 53/95 of 8 December 1998, the General Assembly decided to renew the mandate of MICIVIH until 31 December 1999.

By a letter dated 4 June 1999, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States informed me that, owing to recent financial constraints experienced by his organization, an imminent reduction of the OAS component of MICIVIH would be necessary. As of 1 July 1999, OAS has withdrawn 34 members of its personnel and only one OAS contracted staff remains, the Executive Director, who has been jointly appointed by the Secretary-General of OAS and myself. Five of MICIVIH's nine regional offices have been closed since that date.

Since receipt of the above-mentioned letter of the Secretary-General of OAS, discussions have taken place between officials of the United Nations and OAS on the reduction of the OAS component of MICIVIH and the effects of that reduction on the operation of the joint mission. These discussions have focused on two main issues, namely the payment by OAS of its share of the joint expenses incurred up to the time of the reduction of OAS personnel, and the new modalities of cooperation, including financial arrangements, for the remaining period of the mandate of MICIVIH, on the basis of a significantly reduced OAS component. Such issues will be addressed in revisions to the

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Memorandum of Understanding between OAS and the United Nations for MICIVIH, which was concluded on 17 July 1997.

Accordingly, and subject to the above, the United Nations and OAS have agreed to continue their cooperation in MICIVIH as a joint mission between the two organizations. Whilst the decision of OAS to withdraw all but one of its staff will necessarily have an impact on the functioning of MICIVIH, I believe, however, that, despite that decision, the joint mission will be able to carry out the core activities of the mandate at a meaningful, though reduced, level. It is therefore envisaged that the United Nations component of MICIVIH will remain at the same authorized level for the duration of its current mandate.

I indicated in my last report (A/53/950) that much remained to be accomplished in Haiti with regard to the strengthening of State institutions and civil society organizations, essential elements of an exit strategy of the joint mission. I believe that the international community must continue to work together to ensure that the reforms and the strengthening of local capacities achieved so far are maintained. May I draw your attention, in particular, to paragraph 8 of the Economic and Social Council resolution of 27 July 1999, which recommends that the General Assembly review all aspects of MICIVIH's mandate and operations in light of the situation in Haiti and consider renewing the mandate of the United Nations component of the joint mission.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/95, I shall be submitting to the Assembly, at its fifty-fourth session, the second report on the implementation of the current mandate of MICIVIH, together with my recommendation on future action to be taken. In the meantime, I should be grateful if you would bring the contents of the present letter, including the attached letter from the Secretary-General of OAS (see annex), to the attention of the members of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

Annex

Letter dated 4 June 1999 from the Secretary-General of the OAS addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

I write to inform you that, owing to recent financial constraints being experienced by our organization, an imminent reduction in the Organization of American States (OAS) component of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), our joint mission with the United Nations, will be necessary.

During the last decade, the protection and promotion of human rights and democracy in Haiti has been of paramount importance to our two organizations. The United Nations and the Organization of American States have together played a very active and important role in a process that ultimately restored constitutional order in Haiti in 1994. Despite significant advancements, today Haiti's nascent democracy continues to face many challenges. MICIVIH, which, at the request of the Government of Haiti, was formed in 1993 as a joint mission between the OAS and the United Nations, has been charged with monitoring, verifying and strengthening human rights conditions in Haiti. The joint mission, which serves as an exemplary showcase of close collaboration between our organizations, has made significant contributions to the efforts of the Government of Haiti to strengthen democratic institutions and protect the human rights of its citizens.

After six years in the country, the OAS component of MICIVIH faces serious financial difficulties. Our total financial contribution to our joint initiative, approximately US$ 40 million since the mission's inception, has been funded through external resources from OAS member and permanent observer States. Recent financial donor constraints, however, have made the continuation of the OAS component of the MICIVIH in its present form increasingly difficult.

I understand that the United Nations mandate for MICIVIH, which was approved through 31 December 1999, will be affected by the reduction in the OAS contribution of both human and financial resources. Therefore, I have instructed the General Secretariat of OAS and, in particular, the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, to continue to work closely with your Secretariat in order to achieve an appropriate and united response to this situation. This will necessarily entail a revision of the Memorandum of Understanding between our two organizations governing the joint operation of MICIVIH. I am greatly encouraged by the conversation that I have had with Assistant Secretary-General Alvaro de Soto and I trust that we will continue to build on the excellent relations that our organizations have fostered through this joint effort.

(*Signed*) César **Gaviria**